

## THE

## FREE

## CITIZEN.

E. A. WEBSTER, Editor and Proprietor.

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## TIMELY TOPICS.

CARRUTH, the editor who carried a pistol-ball in his head for seven months, is dead. The man who shot him has been surrendered by his bondsmen, and will soon be put on trial for murder.

LANDIS, who shot Carruth, is the son of an old Pennsylvania Dutch couple from the Landis valley. He married the uppish Miss Mead, who liked money, but soon grew weary of Vineland life, and now Landis is divorced and indicted for murder. Moral: Marry abests of you.

With the law of Massachusetts providing that all railroad trains shall come to a full stop before crossing a track of another line was enacted, it gave much dissatisfaction to railroad men. The law has, however, proved a good one, and it is said that no railroad man of the state would now consent to its repeal.

The new state constitution of Nebraska contains a provision that the United States senators for that state shall be elected by direct vote of the people. It will be an interesting question now to be settled whether this is not in conflict with the constitution of the United States.

A devastating fire swept through Virginia City, Nevada, last week, laying the greater part of the city in ruins, and leaving thousands of people homeless and destitute. No greater calamity has befallen any western town for many years, and if the prospective destruction is as great as reported, and the number of people left homeless as many as reported, their suffering will appear to the charitable the whole country over.

Those at the losses by the burning of Virginia City are somewhat less than was first reported; they are terribly severe, and the suffering is aggravated by the fact that the city was built and inhabited for the most by working people whose only wealth was in their labor and thrift and enterprise. The fire has not consumed the surplus wealth of a rich old community, but the tools, the mechanism, the working forces, the daily bread of a whole community.

JAY GOULD owns twenty million dollars of the gold of the Union Pacific railroad, and controls several millions more, giving him all power in voice in its management and one of the largest shares in its profits. The total of stock is fifty million dollars. If the case now before the United States supreme court is decided in favor of this road, Gould will be gainer in amount double the price of his stock, as the government will be mulcted in over three hundred million dollars.

THE mysterious murders that have become so frequent in New England of late are discussed a great deal in the papers there. One descendant of the Pilgrims offers in an exchange the following valuable suggestions to coroner's juries: "Take up the corps and make the man in charge touch her; if he bleeds that is the man I had the same evidence with one some fifteen years ago that will show you the correct way of holding a coroner's jury that is as true as god in heaven try this and you will satisfy the whole of the New England states just as I tell you help me."

NORMAN WHIARD, of Washington, who is conducting dynamite experiments at Boston, fired, last Saturday, an "improved" chilled iron Whiard projectile, which penetrated a heavy iron plate twelve inches at a distance of 1,655 yards. The shot weighed 531 pounds, and the charge consisted of 70 pounds of hexagonal oriental powder. The shot struck the exact spot at which it was aimed; the plating was entirely perforated, and showed marks of the flanges of the shot. Its rotary motion velocity was 1,370 feet per second. The experiment was witnessed by several hundred persons, including several hundred army and navy officers and students of technology.

IN 1874 more than nine per cent. of the children of the Fatherland refused to present themselves when called upon to enroll as soldiers. In other words, the deserted from the armies aggregated eighty-two thousand four hundred and eighteen men, almost as many as the entire rank and file of the British army. Is undoubtedly true that sixty thousand six hundred and seventy-two of the recruits to military duty belong to Alsace and Lorraine, but a still greater number—sixteen thousand eight hundred and thirty, were natives of Prussia. Most of these men, just served at an age when their life ought to be most beneficial to the community, are supposed to have left the country, which they have a perfect right to do.

There was a passage which led from the room where she slept as far as this mantle-piece, and over the whole there was nothing but the plain white wall paper, upon the back of which she had painted the horrible face which, by holding a light behind it, could be shown distinctly. That explains it," said Mr. Whiard.

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## A TERRIBLE JOKE.

"How was it, Major, that you never married?" I have known you for a long time and yet you have never told me, were the words which George Fenton addressed to his bachelor friend, Major Lee, a retired army officer, as the conversation turned on matters matrimonial.

"Ah, George! it isn't wonderful that I should never mention it." The circumstances which prevented me getting married are of such a melancholy character that it pains me to have them referred to at all," was his answer.

"Now, Major, I'm very curious to know, and as we are old friends, I'll promise to keep it a secret, will you tell me?" But if it would pain you too much to tell I don't want to know," said George.

"Well, then," the Major answered with a sigh, "I will tell you, but here be shuddered, 'tis so horrible, so dreadful!" Let me think. Yes."

It was in the year 1847 when it happened, and I had just entered the twenty-seventh year of my age, with prospects as bright and promising as any young man could wish for. My way was clear to fame in military circles. I had just come from a hasty trip around the world, and my mind was full of strange and new ideas. People flattered me on my success, and the doors of society were open wide to me, that I might pass in and out that they had only been kept shut. I received an invitation to attend a very fashionable ball given by a rich family in the west end of London. I went there, and while talking to a friend in one of the parlors I noticed a particularly handsome young lady. I took a fancy to her immediately, and managed to obtain an introduction to her, which I afterward found out she was anxious to have as I was. You know yourself what feelings possess a man when he first falls in love, and such feelings I had then. However, I dined with her, escorted her to supper, and parted with her at the door of her carriage, receiving an invitation to call at her house. It's scarcely necessary to tell you that I visited her again and again. The following summer I was invited to spend a few months at her father's country residence. I was only too willing to go, and while down there in Devonshire one beautiful calm evening seated on a rustic bench, I offered her my hand and heart, and was accepted.

Now, she was very fond of practical jokes, and never let pass an opportunity to play one, regardless of who might be unfortunate enough to be her victim. One morning I am I can't help calling her by the old familiar name did not come down to breakfast as usual. A servant was sent to her room to see what was the matter and found her lying in bed complaining of a sick headache, an illness which we afterwards found out to be only assumed. She said that during the night she was awakened by a screeching noise, and looking in the direction whence it came, she saw a horrible face looking at her. She fainted and remained motionless more about it. Of course we pronounced this nothing more than a nightmare, but at her request one of her sisters was allowed to sleep with her. The next morning they reported seeing the same horrible apparition, and declared their intention of never sleeping in the room again, as it was haunted.

I volunteered to occupy the department for one night, as much to investigate the cause of the appearance of the "ghost" as because no one else was willing to take possession of the room. About ten o'clock I went to bed, and don't know how long I slept when I was awakened by a screeching noise, and looking in that direction saw a terrible manticore looking face directly over the mantel-piece, and looking straight at me. It had large eyes, a horrible pair of fangs in its mouth, and seemed as if the inside of the head were all on fire. I jumped from the bed, but the moment I touched the floor the face disappeared. I went to bed again, but did not sleep much. I kept watching over the mantle-piece and was rewarded by the face again appearing. I had taken a revolver with me and placed it under my pillow. I quietly took it out, aimed at the face and pulled the trigger."

Here the Major began to cry, and grief for a time interrupted his narrative, and said:

"When I fired we heard a piercing shriek, accompanied by a fall as of some heavy body. We lighted the gas, and rushed to the mantle-piece. I found the place where my bullet had entered. It had made a clean hole. I knew it must be hollow behind, and found that I could push down the wall paper, which I did, and found a large hole about three feet square. Hearing groans inside I jumped through the opening, and groping around I felt a female form which I lifted up, and found to my horror, that it was she who was soon to be my bride. She was shot through the breast, and by the hand of the man who had pledged himself again and again to protect her from all harm. We carried her to the room where I had formerly slept, and which was hers at the time. Here she flagged for a few days, never regaining consciousness, and then died. Now George, you have the reason why I never was married."

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## FIVE AND A HALF PATCHED.

I am a bachelor, an *old* bachelor; at least that's what my nieces—pretty, saucy, clever, lovable girls—call me; and, altogether, very attractive.

"I'll wager she sings, plays and dances well," I said to myself, in conclusion; "she is not rich, or she would not often have glove; or poor, or she would not wear kid gloves."

I must find her!

All very well to say, but how to find her? A "personal," if it met her, soft brown eyes, could frighten so modest a little creature, and she would be likely to hide herself instead of allowing herself to be found.

Shall I show my treasure to my master and ask if they can give me any clue to the original possessor?

Pshaw! the teasing things would make no end of fun for me.

By Jove! where have my wits been?

I'll see what Mrs. Midget says about it. She is by far the most sensible woman of my acquaintance, and very sympathetic, and is at this moment sitting alone in the dining-room in a low rocking-chair, with a giant work-basket by her side and a heap of stockings in her lap.

"There, my dear Mrs. Midget, is the glove. You will see at once that it is all my fancy painted in," and I placed it in the hand of her little hand.

Over went the big work-basket on the floor as Mrs. Midget, throwing herself back in a paroxysm of laughter came near going over too, her absurdly small feet kicking wildly in the air for a moment, until I had restored the rocking-chair to its equilibrium.

"Shall I pick up the things, Mrs. Midget?" said I, as soon as she ceased laughing, rather put out, to tell the truth, by her strange conduct, so unlike the sympathy I had expected.

"Yes—no—if you please—I don't care," stammered Mrs. Midget, in a voice very different from her every-day one, and with the liveliest color in her cheeks.

As I thought, I detected the fracture of rose apparently emanating from a spool of thread I held in my hand, and remembered the glove.

"Did you drop the glove, Mrs. Midget?" asked I, seriously.

"No," replied she, opening a wee hand and showing it, crumpled into a heap. "Take it, and oh! please, say no more about it. It's too—too ridiculous!" and off she went again.

"Mrs. Midget," said I, waving my hand at her, "laugh at me."

I suddenly thought of a man I saw at the circus," said she, with a saucy look I had never seen before in her blue eyes.

"I'm convinced you know the owner of the glove," said I. "It's an odd child whom nature has sought to compensate for lack of other charms by giving her a perfect hand, or a grandmother who still wears five and a half, though her complexion has faded and hair depilated. You know I'm sure of it, and though you completely shattered my beautiful dream you must tell me. And in my excitement I quite unbuttoned my coat, and my buttons fell off, and I buttoned them again around her slender waist."

"Well, if I must, I must," said Mrs. Midget, "Prepare for a female—that the glove is mine."

Mrs. Midget has ceased to be a widow and I am no longer a bachelor.

*Bingo.*

## THE SALARIES OF THE ACTORS.—For the term of \$400 a night, and he is engaged to play in the Fifth Avenue theatre during the present season. Garrett Palmer desire his to play for them and he offered \$600 a night, but he has a very natural dislike to appearing and the scenes of his former triumphs and his eventual ruin. The associations of such a spot would be too painful. It is six years since he opened that theatre with high expectations of success, and during this time he exerted every means to sustain the institution. At last he became fatigued amid general ruin, and he does not care to revisit it.

BARRY SULLIVAN, as a star, receives 40 per cent. of the house—such, at least, is the report—but it is probable that the terms are over-stated, in order to give him what he is. He is a very clever actor, but will not achieve any grand success. The Irish do well in comic performances, and if Barry Sullivan convinces the American people that he is a tragedian, he will be the first of his countrymen that has done so. Davenport, as a star of Shakspearian dignity, is worth \$700 a week. First-class comedians are rated at from \$125 to \$250 a week. James Lewis receives the first-mentioned price, except under extraordinary circumstances. From this rate the salaries decline until they reach \$15 to \$20 per week for stage-walkers.

NEXT LIKE WASHINGTON.—The other day a Vicksbury father, finding it necessary to reprove his son, gently said:

"Don't stuff victuals into your mouth that way, my son; George Washington didn't eat after that fashion."

The boy accepted the reproof without comment, and after pondering for awhile, he remarked to himself:

"And I don't believe George Washington liked his boy for finding a bottle of whisky in the shed when he was hunting after a horse-shoe, either!"

MAKING SELWYN.—"How do you get up your sermon?" asked someone of Mr. Moody. His reply was: "For a number of years I have kept large envelopes marked, say, 'Blood—Heaven'—Earth, etc., and everything I hear or meet with on any of these subjects I make a note of it and keep it in these envelopes. After some time I have material enough to make a thousand dollars' worth of an average sermon."

People sometimes speak of an average sermon as being "worth a thousand dollars," but I have never heard of any sermon being worth a thousand dollars."

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Then I imagined her personal appear-

ance: Soft brown eyes, delicate hair, slight but plump features, fit to compare with her hands—decidedly graceful and, altogether, very attractive.

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